

REMARKS

The present amendment is in response to the Office action January 13, 2005, where the Examiner has objected to claims 3, 7, and 17, and rejected claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8-16, and 18-22. By the present amendment, claims 1, 3, 17, 21, and 22 have been cancelled without prejudice, and claims 2 and 16 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 2, 4-16 and 18-20 remain in the present application. Allowance of remaining claims 2, 4-16 and 18-20 in view of the amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

A. Rejection of the claims under 35 USC §102

The Examiner has rejected claims 21 and 22 under 35 USC §102(e) as being unpatentable over Rong (U.S. Patent No.: 6,775,548). Applicant respectfully disagrees; however, in order to expedite the prosecution of the present application, applicant has cancelled claims 21 and 22 without prejudice. Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of claims 21 and 22 has been rendered moot. Applicant reserves the right to pursue the subject matter of claims 21 and 22 in a continuation application.

B. Rejection of the claims under 35 USC §103(a)

The Examiner has rejected claim 1 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Honkasalo (U.S. Patent No.: 6,137,789) in view of Rong. Applicant respectfully disagrees; however, in order to expedite the prosecution of the present application, applicant has cancelled claim 1. Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that the rejection of claim 1 has been rendered moot. Applicant reserves the right to pursue the subject matter of claims 1 in a continuation application.

The Examiner has additionally rejected claims 2, 4-6, 8-16, and 18-20 as being unpatentable over Rong in view of Honkasalo. Applicant respectfully disagrees; however, in order to expedite the prosecution of the present application, applicant has amended the applicable base claims 2 and 16 to include the allowable subject matter of currently cancelled claims 3 and 17 respectively.


On page 8 of the Office action in the Allowable Subject Matter section, the Examiner states, *inter alia*, that claims 3 and 17 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. As stated above, the limitations of claims 3 and 17 have been included in currently amended independent method claim 2 and currently amended independent apparatus claim 16, respectively. As such, currently amended independent claims 2 and 16 are now in condition for allowance for at least the reasons discussed by the Examiner. Likewise, original claims 4-15 and 18-20, depending from currently amended independent claims 2 and 16 are also now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that claims 2, 4-16, and 18-20 are now in condition for allowance.

C. Conclusion

For all the foregoing reasons, a Notice of Allowance directed to claims 2, 4-16, and 18-20 remaining in the present application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted;

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